

DETECTIVE 726

DETECTIVE 726 "HELL BELOW ZERO"

STORY, CHUCK DIXON
PENCILS, GRAHAM NOLAN
INKS,
LETTERS, JOHN COSTANZA

SCOTT PETERSON, I'M A PENGUIN, RIGHT?

DARREN VINCENZO, ONLY PRETENDS TO GET IT.

DETECTIVE 726

PAGE ONE

SPLASH

Warden Zehrhardt stands looking pissed with a phalanx of riot-gearred prison guards behind him. They hold truncheons and stun guns. It is dark and all around them rain rolls of toilet paper set alight. Shreds of burning paper fall through the air like snow from the tiers of cells above them. This should either be a dramatic upshot or downshot.

CAPTION: BLACKGATE PRISON

ZEHRHARDT: **ANIMALS!**

ZEHRHARDT: YOU'RE ALL **ANIMALS!**

PAGE TWO

PANEL ONE

Zehrhardt is growling to his guards as one of them hooks up a fire hose.

GUARD 1: EVER SINCE THE QUAKE WE BEEN GETTING THESE BLACKOUTS.

ZEHRHARDT: A DAY CONFINED TO THEIR CELLS AND THEY RETURN TO THE STONE AGE.

ZEHRHARDT: TURN THE HOSE ON THEM AND LET THEM STEW.

PANEL TWO

Zehrhardt growls in the foreground as the guard keeps speaking.

ZEHRHARDT: WE'LL SEE ABOUT RESTORING THE POWER TOMORROW.

GUARD 1: "A" BLOCK'S THE MOST TROUBLE. "C"'S BEEN DOWN SINCE YESTERDAY AND--

ZEHRHARDT: "C" IS WITHOUT POWER?

PANEL THREE

Zehrhardt trots along a cell block with guard 1 trotting behind.

ZEHRHARDT: WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL ME, MAN?

ZEHRHARDT: I ONLY HOPE WE'RE NOT TOO LATE!

PANEL FOUR

From inside a dark cell we see a whisp of vapor in the foreground as Zehrhardt shoulders aside an extra heavy insulated door. The guard is behind him. We see a hand or something in the extreme foreground to indicate a body lying there.

ZEHRHARDT: DAMN.

ZEHRHARDT: I TOLD THEM WE DIDN'T HAVE THE FACILITIES HERE--

PAGE THREE

SPLASH

Zehrhardt and the guard stand over a fallen Victor Fries lying on the floor of a cell in a puddle. His body is contorted as though he died in agony. He's dressed only in his briefs and those glasses of his. The walls are lined with refrigeration coils now dripping condensation. A simple steel cot is in one corner.

TITLE: **HELL BELOW ZERO**

ZEHRHARDT: --AND NOW VICTOR FRIES IS DEAD.

ZEHRHARDT: ARKHAM WAS SET UP FOR HIS SPECIAL NEEDS. ALL WE HAD WAS A CONVERTED FOOD LOCKER.

ZEHRHARDT: WE'LL SEND HIM TO GOTHAM BY THE FIRST LAUNCH.

PAGE FOUR

PANEL ONE
LARGEST PANEL
NIGHT

A shot of an old cemetery. It's on hilly ground and the headstones and masoleums are crowded close together like the graveyards out in Brooklyn. There's a couple of guys digging up a grave on a hilltop under a gnarled tree. This would be right out of James Whale but there's the skyline of Gotham in the background. A pall of vapor rises from the grave.

CAPTION: "HE'S A PROBLEM FOR THE CITY NOW.

ROBBER 1: HOLD THE LIGHT HIGHER. I HIT THE VAULT.

ROBBER 2: I HATE THESE CONCRETE BOXES.

PANEL TWO

The robbers are in leather and wear ghastly face paint like voodoo priests. They work with shovels in the grave. A mist rises from the grave. One smiles at the other. The other makes a "yuck" face.

ROBBER 1: SEE THAT FOG? THIS ONE'S FRESH.

ROBBER 2; SO I SMELT. LET'S POP THE TOP AND GET THIS OVER WITH.

PANEL THREE

Low angle shot from the floor of the grave. Robber 1 shovels and Robber 2 looks up in alarm. We can see a great bat shape moving above them.

ROBBER 1: THIS ONE WAS AN ARCHBISHOP. ALL I CAN SMELL IS GOLD.

ROBBER 2: YOU HEAR SOMETHING?

ROBBER 1: YEAH. THE FOLDING MONEY THOSE JERKS ARE GONNA PAY US.

PAGE FIVE

PANEL ONE

Robber 1 turns to see Robber 2 being hauled out of the grave with a jerk. Clods of mud spray from Robber 2's kicking feet.

ROBBER 2: (OFF PANEL, ABOVE) urrrk!

ROBBER 1: GLEN!

PANEL TWO

Robber 1 has pulled a handgun from his waistband and holds it meaningfully. He also has a cel phone in the other hand.

ROBBER 1: SHAME TO WASTE A FRESH GRAVE, WHOEVER YOU ARE!

ROBBER 1: BRING THE VAN OVER, MAX! PRONTO!

PANEL THREE

Robber 1 is levering himself from the grave with pistol in hand and fires at a bat silhouette projected against the lights of a van pulling over the bumpy ground.

ROBBER 1: THERE MAX! I SEE 'IM! I SEE 'IM!

SFX: BLAM! BLAM! BLAM!

PANEL FOUR

A batarang wings out of the dark to take Robber 1 in the forehead. Hard.

ROBBER 1: uh!

PANEL FIVE

Downshot of Robber 1 lying unconscious atop the partly uncovered concrete slab in the grave.

PAGE SIX

PANEL ONE

Batman is crouched as the van comes ripping toward him, knocking over headstones as it bumps toward him, Raising a cloud of dust behind it. Headlights throw Batman into stark relief.

PANEL TWO

From behind Batman comes a column of flame that washes over the van spectacularly, Batman crouches even lower.

FROM SOURCE OF FLAME: **BATMAN!**

FROM SOURCE OF FLAME: **DOWN!**

PANEL THREE

The driver leaps from the burning van looking terrified. He's dressed like the other two. He has a gun in his fist.

DRIVER: HELP!

PANEL FOUR

The driver slips and crashes headlong into a gravemarker with painful effect. His gun goes flying.

DRIVER: uk!

PAGE SEVEN

PANEL ONE

Batman stands over the unconscious driver and speaks to someone in the extreme foreground. The van burns under that tree. The tree is ablaze as well and backlights Batman.

BATMAN: YOU DIDN'T CALL.

OFF PANEL: POOR FORM I KNOW.

OFF PANEL: THE TRAIL WAS HOT. THERE WAS NO TIME.

PANEL TWO

Large panel. Azrael stands, his flame projector dripping hot napalm. He speaks to Batman.

BATMAN: NOW YOU HUNT COMMON GRAVEROBBERS, AZRAEL?

AZRAEL: NOTHING COMMON ABOUT THESE SWINE. THEY STEAL THE HOLIEST ARTIFACTS FROM THE DEAD. I FOLLOWED THEM FROM COAST CITY.

AZRAEL: THEN THEY SELL THEM TO CULTS FOR USE IN UNSPEAKABLE RITUALS.

BATMAN: I THOUGHT THEY WERE JUST BIKERS. SATAN GEEKS.

PANEL THREE

Close-up of Azrael.

AZRAEL: THAT'S WHAT YOU WERE SUPPOSED TO THINK.

AZRAEL: IT'S OVER NOW. YOU CAN HAVE THEM. I KNOW WHEN I'M NOT WANTED.

PANEL FOUR

Batman is tie-wrapping the fallen driver as Azrael walks away into the smoke roiling across the graves.

AZRAEL: DON'T WORRY, SHERIFF.

AZRAEL: I'LL BE OUT OF TOWN BY SUNDOWN.

PAGE EIGHT

PANEL ONE

DAY

Establishment shot of the Medical Examiner's HQ in Gotham.

FROM MORGUE: WORKIN' DAYS NOW, COLLEEN?

FROM MORGUE: ONLY WHILE TOMAGUCHI'S ON VACATION.

PANEL TWO

Colleen Flanagan, the terribly Irish looking M.E. (best established in BATMAN vs PREDATOR III #1) is flipping through a clipboard while a bored looking attendant writes out toe tags in the background. Establish a crowded office with desks piled with files and a single computer.

COLLEEN: ANYTHING INTERESTING OVERNIGHT, PETE?

PETE: A BEHEADING. DON'T GET THEM EVERY NIGHT.

COLLEEN: WHICH PART DID WE GET?

PETE: JUST THE HEAD. THE REST'LL TURN UP.

PANEL THREE

Colleen narrows her eyes at the clipboard. Pete looks up bored.

COLLEEN: AND A TRANSFER FROM BLACKGATE?

PETE: YEAH, CAME IN AROUND FOUR. I TAGGED HIM--

COLLEEN: I KNOW THIS NAME. IT'S--

PANEL FOUR

Same shot and angle but Colleen looks up in alarm. Pete finishes his sentence with a yawn.

PETE: --AND PUT HIM ON ICE.

COLLEEN: --VICTOR FRIES.

PAGE NINE

PANEL ONE

Colleen moves down the corridor of morgue with Pete behind her. Colleen holds a fire ax in her fists. The walls are lined with sheet covered bodies on gurneys. We can see their breath.

PETE: YOU MIND TELLING ME WHAT'S GOING ON?

COLLEEN: WE HAD THIS STIFF IN HERE ONCE BEFORE.

PETE: YOUR SURE? WE DON'T GET MANY REPEAT CUSTOMERS.

PANEL TWO

Colleen turns to him. He's rubbing his hands together and blowing on them.

COLLEEN: THAT'S BECAUSE HE WASN'T REALLY DEAD.

COLLEEN: AND YOU PUTTING HIM IN A COLD ROOM IS JUST WHAT THE DOCTOR ORDERED.

PETE: brrrr. SPEAKING OF COLD...

PANEL THREE

She holds the ax in one hand while she pulls open a large steel refrigerator door. Pete hugs himself behind her.

COLLEEN: YOU'RE RIGHT. THE TEMP'S DOWN.

COLLEEN: I HAVE A FEELING I KNOW WHAT I'M GOING TO FIND.

PETE: Whuh-WHAT'S THAT?

PANEL FOUR

They look into a room whose walls are lined with steel drawers. One of them is open all the way with a torn open bodybag inside and vapor escapes from it.

COLLEEN: OUR GUEST CHECKED HIMSELF OUT.

PETE: whoa.

COLLEEN: CALL NINE-ONE-ONE, PETE.

PAGE TEN

PANEL ONE

A TV image.

A weatherman is at a map of the city. A sun logo is on the map.

ELECTRONIC: --SUMMER'S NOT GOIN' DOWN WITHOUT A FIGHT, FOLKS!

ELECTRONIC: WE'RE HEADING TOWARD THE ONE HUNDRED MARK!

PANEL TWO

TV image.

The weatherman smiles.

ELECTRONIC: AND A HEAT INVERSION OVER GOTHAM IS ONLY TURNING
UP THE HEAT!

ELECTRONIC: HOT AND MUGGY THROUGH THE WEEKEND!

PANEL THREE

A pale hand rests atop a small portable TV. Vapor pours off the hand.

ELECTRONIC: IF YOU DON'T HAVE TO GO OUT THEN STAY INSIDE AND
CHILL!

OFF PANEL: CHILL...

PANEL FOUR

Freeze stands in the glow of the TV and frowns. We see a breakroom
behind him.

FREEZE: THAT'S PRECISELY WHAT I PLAN ON DOING.

PAGE ELEVEN

PANEL ONE

A gaggle of of cars and vans are parked in the middle of an intersection. Sarah Essen is here with Bock and Pettit and other cops race around. There's a WGTM newsvan here with a dish atop it and camera crew outside.

ESSEN; DO WE HAVE OUR PERIMETER, BILLY?

PETTIT: YES, LT ESSEN. I HAVE RIFLES ON EVERY ROOF

PETTIT: AND WE SEALED OFF THE STEAM TUNNELS AND SEWERS ALL AROUND THE BLOCK.

PANEL TWO

She looks toward the morgue across the street. Pettit and Bock are by her.

ESSEN: GOOD WORK. IS HOSTAGE NEGOTIATION ON THE SCENE, MAC?

BOCK: ON THEIR WAY, EL-TEE.

ESSEN: DO WE HAVE ANY HOSTAGES?

BOCK: WE THINK MOST OF THE STAFF IS OUT OF THERE.

PANEL THREE

Pettit speaks frankly to Essen.

PETTIT: LOOK, THIS FROZEN FREAK'S GOT NO BARGAINING POWER. WE HOLD ALL THE CARDS.

ESSEN: HOW DO YOU SEE THAT, BILLY?

PETTIT: WE CUT THE JUICE TO THE BUILDING. THE TEMP GOES ABOVE FREEZING AND HE'LL BE BEGGING TO TURN HIMSELF IN.

PANEL FOUR

They turn to look off panel in alarm.

OFF PANEL: NO!

OFF PANEL: YOU CAN'T!

PAGE TWELVE

PANEL ONE

It's Mort Gunt in a raincoat, hustling toward the group. We see the news cameramen behind him.

GUNT: YOU CAN'T CUT POWER TO THE BUILDING.

PETTIT: AND YOU ARE?

ESSEN: THIS IS DR MORTIMER GUNT; CITY CORONER. MORT THIS IS BILLY PETTIT, TAC CAPTIAN.

PANEL TWO

Gunt speaks to Essen.

GUNT: THE LABS HAVE TO MAINTAIN FREEZING TEMPERATURES.

ESSEN: I UNDERSTAND YOU HAVE A LOT OF CADAVERS--

GUNT: IT'S NOT THE BODIES, LIEUTENANT.

PANEL THREE

Gunt speaks in close-up.

GUNT: IT'S THE CLENCH.

GUNT: WE STILL HAVE TISSUE SAMPLES FROM VICTIMS OF EBOLA GULF "A" AND "B" IN COLD STORAGE.

PANEL FOUR

Bock is horrified and Essen bores in with questions.

BOCK: YOU GOT THE BUG THAT ALMOST WIPED OUT THE CITY IN THERE?

GUNT: THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT REQUIRED US TO SAVE SAMPLES.

ESSEN: WHAT FOR?

PANEL FIVE

Gunt looks annoyed and Essen's expression hardens.

GUNT: EVERYONE WANTED TO STUDY THE SECOND STRAIN. THE *CDC*. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH.

ESSEN: SO WHY ARE THE SAMPLES STILL HERE?

GUNT: IT'S WASHINGTON. THEY MOVE LIKE GLACIERS DOWN THERE.

PAGE THIRTEEN

PANEL ONE

Pettit is turned to look into the glare from the newscamera behind them.

PETTIT: I'M GUESSING WE DON'T WANT THIS TO GET OUT, RIGHT?

ESSEN: GET THEM OUT OF HERE, BILLY!

PANEL TWO

Pettit strides up to the camera crew and one of them jerks a thumb at the dish atop the van.

PETTIT: HAND OVER THAT TAPE, NEWSHOUND.

REPORTER: WON'T DO YOU ANY GOOD. WE'RE LIVE.

PANEL THREE

Essen looks off panel in disgust.

ESSEN: JUST GREAT. ANOTHER CITYWIDE PANIC.

ESSEN: JIM'S GOING TO HIT THE CEILING.

BOCK: WE MIGHT HAVE A MORE IMMEDIATE PROBLEM, EL-TEE.

PANEL FOUR

Mr Freeze is standing in a break room inside the morgue building. He has a tub of ice cream in one hand and a spoon in the other and laughs uproariously at a portable television atop a cabinet. The break room is typical of any workplace with Dilbert cartoons taped on the walls and a duty calendar and maybe one of those signs: YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE CRAZY TO WORK HERE BUT IT HELPS. The refrigerator is open and vapor drifts from it.

FREEZE: HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA!

CAPTION: "WE'D BETTER HOPE FREEZE IS INTO PRESEASON FOOTBALL.

ELECTRONIC: (SMALL) --posing the imminent threat of infection over the entire Gotham area---

PAGE FOURTEEN

PANEL ONE

A loser of some kind is sitting up in bed in some fleabag room. He looks blearily at a telephone on a side table littered with takeout food containers, bottles and magazines. Laundry hangs in disarray around the room. There's a battered TV on in the background with a coat hanger antenna.

SFX: briiing!

BERG: whuh?

SFX: briiing!

BERG: OH.

PANEL TWO

Berg holds the phone to his ear and looks apprehensive.

BERG: YEAH?

ELECTRONIC: ...

BERG: IS THAT YOU?

PANEL THREE

LARGEST PANEL.

Mr Freeze lies back in a steel tub filled with ice and speaks into a telephone he's pulled from a wall. Vapor hangs in the air. He's in a block walled room with bodies on autopsy tables.

FREEZE: YES, IT'S ME, BERG. NOW I NEED YOU TO LISTEN IN CASE WE GET DISCONNECTED.

ELECTRONIC: SURE!

FREEZE: DO YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO WRITE WITH?

PANEL FOUR

Berg is writing on an empty pizza box and looking confused.

BERG: GO AHEAD.

ELECTRONIC: ...

BERG: YEAH?

ELECTRONIC: ...

BERG: HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO--

ELECTRONIC: ..!

BERG: OKAY! OKAY!

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PAGE FIFTEEN

PANEL ONE

A shot of an office inside the morgue. There's a phone on the desk. There's frost on the glass of a partition.

SFX: riiing!

PANEL TWO

A wall phone in an autopsy room. Icicles hang from an autopsy table.

SFX: riiing!

PANEL THREE

Looking down a shadowy hallway in the morgue. There's a wall phone on a wall in the background.

SFX: riiing!

PANEL FOUR

Bock stands with a cel phone and Essen is by him. They're outside by the cop cars.

BOCK: NO ANSWER ANYWHERE INSIDE, EL-TEE. FREEZE DOESN'T WANT TO TALK.

ESSEN: PROBABLY WORKING ON HIS DEMANDS.

BOCK: WHAT'S OUR NEXT MOVE?

PANEL FIVE

Sarah frowns in the foreground. On the wall of a building above her we see a bat-shaped shadow thrown high from an unseen source on a lower roof.

ESSEN: WE WAIT...

ESSEN: FOR OUR FIRST BREAK.

PAGE SIXTEEN

PANEL ONE

Berg stands sweating in a bar setting. He;s dressed better than we last saw him.

BERG: RIME. WHITE. WINTERS.

BERG: GLAD YOU GUYS COULD COME. THE BOSS NEEDS FAST ACTION.

PANEL TWO

Three hoods sit around a table in an other wise empty taproom. Maybe there's a drunk sitting asleep at a booth in the backgroud. They all have bottled beers and don't look so happy. Berg regards them.

RIME: I HEARD THE NEWS. FREEZE'S GOT HIMSELF IN ANOTHER JAM.

WHITE: WE'RE SUPPOSED TO PULL HIM OUT, RIGHT?

WINTERS: WHAT'S IN IT FOR US, BERG? WHAT'S OUR PERCENTAGE?

PANEL THREE

Berg leans on the table and frowns at them with narrowed eyes. Their attitude soften.

BERG: YOU WILLIN' TO PLAY THE ODDS THAT FREEZE WON'T COME OUT ON TOP?

BERG: WHAT'S HIS ATTITUDE GONNA BE TO ANYONE WHO DIDN'T HELP HIM?

BERG: PRETTY DAMN FROSTY, huh?

PANEL FOUR

The three hoods are up and heading for the door. One of them tosses a ten spot to the table. Berg still leans on the tabel and smiles without humor.

RIME: I'M IN.

WHITE: COUNT ON ME, BERG.

WINTERS: CAN'T KEEP THE BOSS WAITIN'.

PAGE SEVENTEEN

PANEL ONE

Colleen is sneaking along the wall of a hallway inside the morgue. She has that ax in her hands. She now wears a parka and gloves. Mist hangs in the air. Every surface is frosted.

COLLEEN: PETE?

COLLEEN: PETE?

PANEL TWO

Colleen stands outside a swinging door marked MEN.

COLLEEN: YOU GONNA MAKE ME COME IN THERE, PETE?

PANEL THREE

She's cautiously shouldering the mens room door aside with the ax held ready.

COLLEEN: WITH EVERYTHING THAT'S GOING ON--

COLLEEN: --ALL YOU CAN THINK OF IS YOUR BLADDER.

PANEL FOUR

She's peeking around a tiled corner with eyes wide.

COLLEEN: COULDN'T YOU JUST HOLD IT 'TIL--

COLLEEN: oh!

PANEL FIVE

She backs away from Pete kneeling on the floor of the mens room in a contorted pose of surprise. He is rimed with ice and icicles drip from him. He is in a frozen puddle. Vapor drifts from him. He's in a parka now too. Water pipes in the room have burst and thick icicles hang from the pipes.

PANEL SIX

She crashes out through the mens room door with the ax in hand. She looks panicked.

PAGE EIGHTEEN

PANEL ONE

A figure stands in the extreme foreground in the hallway. Colleen comes to a skidding halt outside the mens room.

COLLEEN: uh?

FIGURE: ANOTHER LIVE ONE?

PANEL TWO

She runs into the foreground as Freeze aims a nozzle at her that fires a cloud of gas. He wears gas tanks on his back held there by straps. The hall fills with a white cloud. the backm of her parka gets rimed with frost. A mist covers the floor around Freeze. Vapor drifts from him.

FREEZE: HOLD STILL.

FREEZE: THIS WON'T HURT A BIT.

PANEL THREE

She is skidding around a corner and shrugging out of her ice rimed parka and dropping the ax.

FROM AROUND THE CORNER: FOREVER FROZEN! FOREVER YOUNG!

PANEL FOUR

Her frozen parka and the ax hit the floor and shatter like glass.

SFX: kriiish!

PANEL FIVE

Freeze slips on the ice as he runs around the corner with his nitrogen thrower. Colleen is gone. He slams into a wall. The hall is lined with sheet covered gurnies.

FREEZE: unnh!

FREEZE: DAMN!

PAGE NINETEEN

PANEL ONE

He rises to one knee and looks up at a door marked PATHOLOGY.
FREEZE: WELL, ANOTHER HAPPY ACCIDENT.

PANEL TWO

We see Freeze entering pathology as seen from one of those gurnies along the hall.

PANEL THREE

Colleen is stepping down from the gurney. A corpse lies under the sheet. She looks off panel apprehensively.

PANEL FOUR

She runs up a staircase looking behind her as she runs.

PANEL FIVE

Now she stops with a hand on the banister as Batman drops from the stairwell above to drop before her.

COLLEEN: WOW!

BATMAN: I WON'T HURT YOU

COLLEEN: THAT'S WHAT THE OTHER GUY SAID!

PAGE TWENTY

PANEL ONE

Batman stands above her draped in his cape. Colleen regards him.

COLLEEN: YOU'RE THE BATMAN.

BATMAN: YOU'VE HEARD OF ME.

COLLEEN: WE'VE MET.

BATMAN: I DON'T REMEMBER THAT.

PANEL TWO

Two shot. He's coming down the steps toward her.

COLLEEN: IT WAS HERE. THE LAST TIME THIS HUMAN POPSICLE CAME
BACK TO LIFE.

COLLEEN: WE CALLED NINE ONE ONE. THEY SENT YOU?

BATMAN: THERE'S A POLICE CORDON OUTSIDE.

PANEL THREE

She follows him down the stairs.

COLLEEN: SO WHY DON'T THEY MOVE IN? IT'S BEEN HOURS!

BATMAN: THEY'RE HOLDING BACK. WAITING FOR FREEZE'S ULTIMATUM.

COLLEEN: ULTIMATUM?

PANEL FOUR

Batman is turned to look up at her. She looks stunned.

BATMAN: YOU HAVE SAMPLES OF THE FILOVIRUS HERE--THE CLENCH.

COLLEEN: OH MY GOD.

PANEL FIVE

A hand flies to her face as she looks horrified in close-up.

COLLEEN: HE'S IN PATHOLOGY.

PAGE TWENTY ONE

PANEL ONE

They stand in the open doorway of pathology. In the foreground there's an open freezer that's had trays pulled from it. The freezer had locks on it but they are wrenched off. Containers and beakers lie smashed on the floor. Vapor rises from them.

COLLEEN: WE'RE TOO LATE.

BATMAN: HOW LONG WILL THEY REMAIN FROZEN IN THE OPEN AIR?

COLLEEN: AROUND FREEZE? INDEFINITELY.

PANEL TWO

She crouches over the broken vials and beakers. There's plasma bags here as well.

COLLEEN: BUT HE COULD LEAVE THEM TO THAW ANYWHERE.

BATMAN: HE'LL USE THEM TO DEAL HIS WAY OUT OF HERE.

BATMAN: AND HE MAY JUST RELEASE THE VIRUS ANYWAY.

PANEL THREE

They turn at an off panel voice.

OFF PANEL: THEN IT'S A GOOD THING I STUCK AROUND.

OFF PANEL: IF YOU'RE GOING TO GUARANTEE GOTHAM'S SAFETY--

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PAGE TWENTY TWO

SPLASH

Batman is turned in a crouch in the foreground with batarang in fist. Colleen holds that fire ax in the extreme foreground. They are turned to see Azrael stepping from the mist.

AZRAEL: --YOU'LL NEED THE SEARING FLAME OF AZRAEL.

TO BE CONTINUED!